

## The 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Our Lady of America Apparitions and Sister Mildred Neuzil's Clarification on Aspects of the Message

Already in the early 1940's I was interiorly enlightened concerning the subject around which the mission entrusted to me would evolve. This was the sanctification of the family through imitation of the Holy Family. ... I will try, in my poor way, to explain as briefly as possible, the union that exists between the apparitions and the ultimate goal towards which they all converge, namely, the sanctification of the family through imitation of the Holy Family's constant awareness and adoration of the Divine Indwelling Presence. It is quite simple, but if one is not conscious of the main point, it can be confusing.

First of all, it is necessary that we live pure and mortified lives if we expect the Divine Presence to be fruitful in us. Secondly, in order to help us lead such a life, we must become more and more conscious of this Divine Presence dwelling in our souls in order to sanctify our living. Thirdly, we could have no holier or more perfect an example to follow than the one God Himself has given to us, namely, the Holy Family. (Sister Mildred Neuzil's notes explaining a plan for her mission and answers to questions. All items in red are direct quotes from her notes.)

Sister stated that Our Lady's appearance with the lily in her hand and her heart encircled with the red roses of suffering is to remind us of this first condition of purity and penance for the Divine Presence to be fruitful in our lives. She said the second condition, developing a deep consciousness of the Divine Presence in our souls, **required a different reminder, so Mary presented herself as Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling whereby she seeks to impress on our minds the importance of this doctrine of Holy Church** and for us to realize its need in the sanctification of our lives. Regarding the third condition, we have the reminder of the Holy Family itself through the imitation of which every family, religious and secular, are to be sanctified.

**Purity, penance and constant awareness of the Divine Indwelling Presence, this was the life the Holy Family lived and it is the life we too must lead if we desire to attain to union with God.**

That the angels should interest themselves in this work of renewal is no surprise, she says, for they are always on the alert to further the cause of God and the Church. The different appearances of St. Michael, the angel of Peace and God's warrior, are not surprising. He came with the palm, symbol of victory over our fallen nature, and with the sword with which the saints conquered themselves, the world, and the devil. Later, he came with an immense flaming torch, symbol of Divine Charity by which evil is overcome and the Kingdom of Christ is established in the hearts of men. It is fitting that St. Gabriel, the angel of purity, should bid us go to Mary, the Immaculate Virgin, to learn great purity of heart. Jesus was first to speak about the renewal of the family, then Our Lady, and lastly, St. Joseph, who, in keeping with his role as head of the Holy Family, asked that his fatherhood be honored. Later, the two angels over America and the United States came, each promising protection against the evil that is focused on the United States, each pledging assistance, along with Mary, Joseph, and all the angels and saints, in this work of worldwide spiritual renewal in which the United States must take a leadership role.

Sister addresses the titles of "America" and "the United States of America."

**I have known for many years that the United States and America are two different things, but the United States does belong to America. Our Lady, it is true, asks all of America to be the first to take up the cause of renewal, but it is the United States that is to lead the world in this. So Our Lady has stated and made known to me. Therefore, it is for the United States to humbly accept Mary's choice and to do all that it can to fulfill its mission among the people of the earth.**

Regarding confusion over the title of Our Lady of America and Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sister said she was aware that the latter had been proclaimed "Empress of the Americas," North, Central and South. **"Anyway, Empress of the Americas and Our Lady of America are two different titles and therefore could be held by the same person,"** she stated. Most often, America, in the singular and general usage, refers to the United States of America.

Our Lady of America's message is for the world. Our Lady did proclaim the message of renewal worldwide. If we read and re-read the message carefully it is clear. **"The United States has simply been asked to be the first, to take the initial step towards this renewal."**

With respect to holding back the hand of God, Sister writes:

**Our Lord is the sole Mediator with the Father. It is only through Him and with Him and by Him that Mary holds back the Hand of God and appeases His wrath against us. Mary, as well as ourselves, goes to God only through Christ and it is in this light that we must understand her words concerning her intercession in our behalf.**

Sister states that Our Lady was with her when she wrote the prayer to the Immaculate Conception on October 5, 1956. She was kneeling by a small table in her room and Mary was standing on her right side, close to her. She did not hear the words but they flooded her mind, impelling her to write until the prayer was finished. Then Our Lady disappeared. As for the statue for the National Shrine, Sister explains:

**Our Lady could have asked for another shrine to be built which would have entailed much more trouble and inconvenience, but all she asks is that a particular statue of her be placed in the shrine already being built. Is this being unreasonable do you think? Besides, in a shrine as large as this surely there would be place for another statue even if it is to be put in the niche of honor as a part of Mary's request. Anyway, Our Lady is not to blame for the long wait. She already requested the statue in 1956. It is my fault. I blame myself for not making it known then when she requested it.**

As for the medal, Sister sought Our Lady's direction on what to do about it. She says on June 21, 1959, as she was praying in her room, she suddenly felt Our Lady's presence and, without words, was given an understanding what course she was to take.

**I was made to understand that if Authority wished to simplify the medal, I was not to oppose it in any way even if this would mean that Our Lady's wishes were not carried out. Our Lady impressed upon me the necessity of child-like obedience and confidence in the Authority placed over me. The Voice of Holy Church should be obeyed rather than a voice even of heaven, for such is the will of God.**

As for the First Wednesday devotion in honor of St. Joseph, Sister says she is sure St. Joseph would never think of upsetting the good order of the Church which has designated the Glorious Mysteries of the rosary to be said on Wednesdays. **"Therefore, it is an extra five decades of the rosary that he asks for on the first Wednesday of every month."**

Which bishop? Sister goes on, addressing her spiritual director.

**You recall Bishop, that Our Lady instructed me that everything was to be done only through you. I myself was to do nothing directly. Therefore, when Our Lady asked me to go to the Bishop, it was to be done through you and only indirectly by myself. You will remember that in one of the petitions in the “message” Our Lady’s plea was that you go to “him who is head over you” making known her desires. I take this to mean His Grace, the Archbishop. I wouldn’t know who else it could mean. I made the mistake of going to the Bishop residing at the place where I was stationed at the time. Our Lady does not want me to do things that way, directly, I mean, and because I did, it turned out to be the wrong person, at least so it appears to me. But Our Lady turned this to advantage as it drew a very zealous Bishop to her cause, one who would do anything to promote her honor.**

Sister’s notes have no date but 1959. In 1959, Paul F. Leibold, Sister Mildred’s spiritual director since 1940, was an auxiliary bishop in the archdiocese of Cincinnati, Ohio. Karl J. Altar was the Archbishop of the Cincinnati archdiocese in which the central house of the Sisters of the Precious Blood was located. Sister Mildred left the active order in May of 1958 to enter the Our Lady of Nativity Cloister in New Riegel, Ohio, and was then in the Toledo diocese under the authority of Bishop George J. Rehring, likely the bishop meant by the place where she was “**stationed at the time.**” With Toledo within the archdiocese of Cincinnati, Archbishop Altar would still be “**the bishop who has head over you**”, the one to whom Our Lady said to go to with the message. The Toledo and Cincinnati dioceses worked closely together to bring Our Lady’s cause to fruition.

In review, Our Lady appeared to Sister under the image of Our Lady of America® on September 26, 1956. In November of 1957, she appeared as Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling®. Various bishops in the Cincinnati and Toledo areas were given Sister’s manuscripts for review. On May 1, 1961, Bishop Leibold put his imprimatur on Sister’s sketch of the medal of Our Lady of America®. It was he who later had the medal struck, choosing to follow Sister’s design. Bishop Rehring urged the study of the doctrine of the Divine Indwelling in distributing the medal and prayer cards explaining it. Bishop Leibold had small ivory statues made and sent to the Vatican and wooden plaques of the image made which hung in the National Shrine and in the Cincinnati chancery. Bishop Leibold was made archbishop of Cincinnati in 1969 when Archbishop Altar retired, but Archbishop Leibold died suddenly on June 1, 1972. Father Edmund Morman, mentioned in the Diary on page 38 as “**my devoted priest-son, Edmund,**” became Sister’s spiritual director thereafter until his death in an auto accident on February 17, 1986. January 3, 1984 was the final message for the public. It was at this time that Sister asked Our Lady if there would be a nuclear war. Her answer is on page 45 of the Diary. Sister Mildred Neuzil entered the eternal dwelling place of the Most Holy Trinity on January 10, 2000. Her funeral was held, fittingly, at the Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey, Ohio.

**Live my Triune God, so live in me that all I do be done by Thee, that all I think and all I say  
will be Thy thoughts and words this day.**

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